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Our Contributors :

## An Approach to the Fifth Plan for Tribal Welfare.

S. K. PALIT, I.A.S.

It is generally agreed that, however much we may augment the outlay in the backward classes sector during the Fifth Plan, no visible impact can be made on the problem within a span of 5 years unless a substantial portion of the general sector outlay is earmarked for it. Although this point regarding supplemental character of the resources in the backward classes sector has been repeatedly emphasized at different levels by the Government of India and the State governments, no satisfactory formula has so far been evolved. earmarking of funds on the basis of a certain percentage of the outlay as was attempted in some States may not always be possible nor is perhaps a very convenient method.

2. As a second alternative, the overall plan of a State can be split up into the districts which is being attempted in Orissa for the last 2 or 3 years and from that an approximate indication can be obtained regarding the extent of financial outlay from a particular development department for a district which is either a scheduled area or area otherwise a predominantly tribal area. There are however the

following limitations involved in this approach. (i) Under the existing planning mechanics, a broad indication can be obtained regarding annual plan outlay of a particular development department in respect of a district. If the tribal pocket is somewhat smaller than a district and not necessarily coterminous with a subdivision, it will be difficult to identify the extent of the plan resources from the general sector flowing into this area during the course of a financial year. This would be possible if the detailed planning from the district level is perfected to an extent where even before the implementation of the annual plan begins it would be possible to know which part of the scheme would benefit this region or sub-region within a district. Although attempts at district planning have been initiated, the mechanics of planning has not yet developed to that extent. (ii) Even if an indication of the approximate financial outlay for the annual plan in respect of development department is available for the region, whether the benefit ultimately percolates down to the tribals in that area can be determined only by a detailed physical programming. For ex-

pic, the plan outlay of a crore of rupees on a medium irrigation project in a scheduled district by itself would not indicate the extent to which the Tribals of the district have been benefited unless a study of the area cultivated, the extent of utilisation of skilled and unskilled tribal labour for the construction programme, etc., are worked out. This is precisely the reason why, notwithstanding a very heavy investment in 2 or 3 scheduled districts of the State, namely, Keonjhar and Sundergarh, during the last 15 years, the tribes of these 2 regions have not developed to the desired extent.

3. Therefore, an attempt to ensure that a substantial portion of the general sector outlay benefits the Tribals has to be worked out not in terms of earmarking of financial outlays but in terms of a suitable machinery at the State level and the district level which will make concurrent evaluation of on-going programmes to assess as well as to ensure that a major portion of the benefit goes to the Tribals. At the present stage of planning, this exercise is limited to an annual evaluation which is essentially of the nature of a post-mortem. As already indicated, continuous evaluation from this angle at the district level and the State level is a part of the overall improvement in the planning mechanics whereby the detailed District planning (both physical and financial) is done before a particular plan scheme is put into operation. Unless detailed district planning and ex-ante project

appraisal is developed it would be difficult to take up this evaluation with any degree of effectiveness.

4. As regards the resources available within the backward classes sector, certain basic trends as indicated by the development during the last 20 years since the inception of the First Five-Year Plan should be taken into consideration.

5. The trend of development of various categories of Scheduled Tribes over the last two decades, i. e., since the Constitution came into effect and a year later when the First Five-Year Plan was started, would indicate certain prima facie imbalance in the rate of growth of the various communities. The more advanced communities such as Mundas, Oraons and Santhalas in Orissa have developed at a much faster pace than the comparatively backward communities like Saures, Juangs, Dongria Kondhs and Kutia Kondhs, etc. Although special attempts have been made through the various schemes of Tribal & Rural Welfare Department of this State to accelerate the pace of their development, the comparatively advanced communities (both educationally and economically) have tended to take a greater share of the special benefits accruing from these supplemental resources of the Tribal & Rural Welfare Department. There are 62 Scheduled Tribes in Orissa. A comparative study of some of the major tribes in respect of the Pre-Matric and Post-Matric Scholarship awarded annually tribe-wise would corroborate this point. The largest and

the most backward tribe in the State, viz., Kondhs have the lowest percentage of literacy and the minimum number of Pre-Matric and Post Matric Scholarships are awarded to this group. The Santals in Mayurbhanj and the tribes of Sundergarh take by far the largest share of the stipends and scholarships.

6. Similarly if we take the development of the infrastructure, the economic occupation, etc. It would be observed that some of the groups which have been classified as the most backward 'A' category tribes by the State Government, namely, Lanja Saoras, Juangs, Bonda and Koyas still continue to be practically in the same condition as they were 20 years back. Although schools have been located in the Bondla hill (Koraput) in the Jharsupur (Koraput) for the Dongria Kondhs in Gunupur Subdivision of Koraput district, for koyas of Malkangiri Subdivision and similar other areas, the enrolment of these boys in the educational institutions is poor and wastage is heavy. There were hardly one or two Bondla boys in the High Schools of Govindpalli in Koraput district and it is not known if they are continuing their studies further.

7. This raises a very fundamental problem, viz., the Constitution of India laid down certain special provisions in respect of Scheduled Caste, Scheduled Tribe and other backward classes in the matter of reservation in services, educational and economic schemes for their development with a view to enable these backward communities to

catch up with the average citizen of the country. This no doubt still remains a problem. For example, the average literacy in Orissa is 31 per cent according to 1961 census as against which the average literacy of the tribal is 7 per cent. Thus while the problem of catching up with the all-India or all-Orissa average still remains and efforts have to be made to achieve this end, the concept of an average in respect of literacy or economic development among the tribals is becoming a highly academic issue. While 7 per cent is the average literacy of the tribals in Orissa according to 1961 Census, if we take the district-wise average it would appear that districts like Phulbani, Sambalpur, Sundergarh, Dhenkanal are far better off as their literacy is above 10-11 per cent whereas the average in Koraput is 3 per cent. In Ganjam and Keonjhar and Kalahandi it is of the order of 5 per cent. Even within a district if we take smaller groups like Bondas, Koyas, Dongria Kondhs and Rathia Kondhs, etc. the literacy will be practically 0-1 per cent. Thus the average does not reflect the real bottleneck or the critical areas where inadequate development keeps the State average at a low level.

8. Although the resources of the backward classes sector are limited, the basic assumption in the constitution was that as some tribes get more and more developed they can be descheduled or the facilities enjoyed by them can be progressively reduced so that the residual groups, which constitute the hard core of the problem, receive the major attention in

terms of organization and resources. However, due to various compulsions inherent in the realization of the existing situation, it can be assumed that this process of De-scheduling or attempt to concentrate our resources on a smaller list of Scheduled Tribes would not be possible.

9. It is, therefore necessary that from the Fifth Plan and, in fact during the next 15 or 20 years, if the constitutional objectives are to be achieved according to a time-bound programme, attempts should be made to devise separate integrated schemes for the accelerated development of these smaller groups which have special handicaps.

10. These integrated schemes for well identified areas would not imply that tribes who are dispersed in smaller groups in other pockets will not receive any attention. These tribal groups depending on the nature of their concentration will get (i) benefits from the general sector outlay and (ii) where there is substantial tribal concentration not covered by an existing T. D. Block, the question of starting a sub-Block can be taken up. The major part of the resources, however, should be for the formulation of integrated schemes for economic development including outlays for social services. The existing pattern of having pilot tribal development projects purely for the economic development of particular areas supplemented by additional resources for social services to be made available separately is not a very satisfactory approach in as much as the problem of a tribal

village is an integrated one and unless the economic programme also takes cognizance of a certain minimum social amenities, the desired results cannot be achieved. It is necessary that the schemes to be formulated during the Fifth Plan for backward areas, to be identified for the purpose should be integrated and composite schemes taking into consideration the totality of the life of a tribal as a part of the village community.

11. A question sometimes arises in the context of the formulation of plans for backward pockets as to whether it should be an area development plan or a plan for the development of a particular tribal community. There is no basic dichotomy in this twin approach. If a particular tribal group is scattered over a large area it is not possible to evolve any satisfactory plan for the development of this community as one integrated plan. It is only if a substantial portion of this tribal community inhabits a well identified and compact geographical area, a suitable composite scheme for their development can be worked out. It will be in certain respects, an area development, for example, regarding infrastructure or in the provision of social overheads but, in terms of specific economic schemes, it has to be an individualized approach for the development of that tribal community. In this respect, it would be somewhat analogous to the S.P.D.A. and M.P.A.L. which involves identification of beneficiaries and providing them with the necessary assistance to improve their condition. In States like Orissa, Madhya

Pradesh, Bihar, Andhra H. is possible to identify such well-defined regions of very backward tribal communities which can constitute one viable administrative unit for implementation of programmes.

12. Successful formulation of an integrated plan of this nature and implementation of these programmes would depend largely on providing a suitable machinery for the purpose. The Fifth Tribal Development Projects which have been started are registered societies with Collectors as the Chairmen and officials and non-officials as members. They receive grants from the Government of India directly. It provides for a nucleus staff on the assumption that the other extension staff would be provided by the various development departments and their field Agencies. Thus the success of this Agency would be proportionate to the measure of co-operation which the Collector and the Project Director are able to secure from other development agencies. Secondly it would also depend on ensuring that sufficient allocations from other development departments are made available in the project area to supplement nuclear funds of the project and particularly the social services aspects of the programme not included within the scheme of the Tribal Development Agency are also provided in adequate measure by the concerned departments.

13. The pattern adopted by the Tondakaranya Development Authority envisages a more liberal

staffing pattern. Commissioner for Scheduled Caste and Tribe in one of his annual reports had suggested adoption of this approach for Tribal Development Programmes as well.

14. In Andhra, Regional Development Boards have been set up for the purpose of formulation of plans. It would be desirable to consider the possibility of having a more comprehensive Tribal Development Agency which would receive funds from the State Government as well as from the general sector and the backward classes sector and commercial financing institutions and take up intensive work in these areas in respect of the 4 or 5 major heads of development including social services. This would incidentally help in ensuring more intensive supervision by securing the services of a few selected officers from the various development departments with proper orientation and giving them suitable financial incentive and retaining them for this work for a minimum period. Since these officers have to work under various physical handicaps in isolated areas it is necessary to provide them with the necessary monetary incentive for this special nature of assignment. If the implementation of project depends very largely on the field staff of various development departments in the project area, it is difficult to grant special incentives without creating problems of cadre management. This is the main problem in the

Pilot Tribal Development Projects which have been taken up during the Fourth Plan.

15. As regards formulation of the plan for the project it is to be preceded by a detailed survey of the requirements of the area. The census data (1961) in respect of some of the backward tribes are quite comprehensive but the limitation is that it is based on a 20 per cent sample. The 1971 Census data is not yet available. When a project report is to be formulated on an individualistic approach, identification of beneficiaries and their problems have to be worked out in the project report so that the scheme can be formulated accordingly. The land holding pattern, the extent to which this can be put to intensive agricultural operation, the extent to which it can be supplemented

by subsidiary occupation like animal husbandry, handicrafts, etc., the extent of indebtedness, the scope for processing all minor forest produce and how far an organisation like the Tribal Development Co-operative Society in Orissa or the Girijan Corporation of Andhra Pradesh or the Madhya Pradesh Tribal Development Corporation can help in these efforts, the scope for starting small or medium industries and advanced planning to train up the tribals in these areas to avail of those benefits have to be worked out and funds released to the Agency both from the State Government and from the Government of India for implementation of this project. Unless funds are pooled and an organisation is built up for this selective approach it will be difficult to make any dent on the problem during the next 13 or 20 years.

## The Concept of Primitive.

DR. KULAMANI MOHAPATRA

This paper is concerned with the concept of 'primitive' as it is employed in anthropology and to certain extent in sociology as well. This is a topic which is both preliminary and fundamental for understanding the problems of the primitive tribes. Even at the present stage of maturity of the scientific study of the tribal problems there is a lot of controversy about the definition of the term 'primitive'. As yet the concept lacks precision and there is a lot of confusion in the fields of sociological as well as applied research. It is therefore necessary that the topic should be discussed at some length.

The idea of the 'primitive' is as old as civilisation. The civilised man in his efforts at discovering his own genesis has always tried to locate or imagine a way of life completely different from his own which he has termed as 'primitive'. Conversely primitive societies on their part have not generated what may be termed as a definite idea or conception of civilisation. This is not because the primitive people have no sense of history and development. They have certainly very clear notion of

development and progress. But as Stanley Diamond observes "a history to them is the recital of sacred meanings within a cycle as opposed to a linear perception of time. The merely pragmatic event, uninvolved with the sacred cycle, falls as it were out side history, because it is of no importance in maintaining or revitalising the traditional forms of society."  
xx xx xx xx xx  
The primitive people have no vicarious sense of history and no linear idea and hence no prophetic idea of social progress". (Diamond, 1964, V).

There are certain commonly agreed characteristics which are associated with the primitive people. These are (1) absence of a written language, (2) a relatively simple technology, (3) social institutions which are cast in a simple mould, (4) smaller numbers, (5) relative isolation and (6) societies whose cultures are in general characterised by a slower rate of change. There is hardly any controversy as far as these characteristics are concerned. Controversies abound when the basic differences between the primitive and the civilised are sought to be

thrashed out with the implicit belief that these differences are absolute and unmeasurable. It is therefore necessary first to give a historical sketch of the concept of primitive, as it has developed in anthropology and then to discuss a dominant sample of the controversial themes.

The early anthropologists, who were strongly influenced by the evolutionist theory of the unilinear school, worked under the belief that primitives represented the back waters in the stream of evolution. This notion was upheld with regard to the culture and, sometimes in addition to it, to the biological status of the primitive people. After the turn of the century and anti-evolutionist trend was precipitate and anthropologists like Elliot Smith attempted to explain almost all cultural elements from one source—Egypt. This extreme form of diffusionism was succeeded by the Kulturkreis school. Anthropologists of this school consider the peoples of the world as products of several core cultures which spread over the entire world after attaining certain characteristics in the Old World, especially in Asia. As these basic cultures spread, new elements were added and others lost, but in every case enough of the original complex remained so that each could be identified.

The American historical school "emphasized the study of non-literate cultures from within, from the view point of the members of the society rather than from that of the observer". (Dorier, 1928,1931). The concept of

the non-literate as essentially inferior and as an individual incapable of surmounting his "lowly level" was specifically challenged by Franz Boas in "The Mind of the Primitive Man". Boas demonstrated that the lowly position is merely the result of an ethnocentric comparison on the basis of one standard, i.e., the anthropologist's own culture.

The views of the British anthropologists are almost similar to their American counterparts but they also differ on some vital points. Contrasted with the American school, they deal with a narrower range of cultural phenomena within a structural-functional framework. They are gradually becoming conscious of history, yet their analysis is still devoid of historical depth.

After this historical review I will conclude the paper after a brief discussion of the most dominant tendency usually associated with the concept of 'primitive' i. e., the unmeasurable difference between the civilized and the primitive.

The idea of a 'primitive mentality' inferior to that of the civilized was developed by Levy-Bruhl. Though discredited by empirical findings over fifty years the idea is still in vogue, especially among administrators and the lay public. Levy-Bruhl spoke of a "prelogical mentality" of primitive people whose life is supposed to be determined by the law of participation—a concept which he had taken over from Durkheim. According to him the members of primitive societies, do not experience them

selves as separate individuals, they and the objects of their world appear to them just as the same, just as others.

Dr. H. Werner explains the concept of primitive in terms of more general psychological processes. According to him 'primitive' does not simply mean that which chronologically comes first. Primitive is that which lacks greater differentiation and is comparable to childhood phenomena. The equating of childhood phenomena with primitive is completely erroneous as findings in the ontogenetic development of human beings cannot be compared with those in phylogenetic sequences. Werner made comparison of phenomena observed at different stages of development starting with a neglecting the very first of comparison.

Another mistaken notion of 'primitive' is to assume the lack of abstract behaviour among the primitive people. The normal behaviour of human beings is characterised by two kinds of approaches to the world—the concrete behaviour and the abstract behaviour. This can be illustrated by an example. When we feel sleepy and go to bed, we act concretely after without being aware of what we are doing. The reaction is based on the after effect of previous equal situations. If however, we reflect that by going to sleep early we might prevent someone who had to read late in the night and thus refrain from going to bed, we approach the situation abstractly. The action of any performance presupposes the abstract attitude

again if anything goes wrong. In the concrete activity the abstract attitude is taken to correct the mistake. Patients with impairment of abstract attitudes show definite failures in all situations to which one can come to terms only by the abstract approach. It, therefore, goes without saying that a society cannot survive if all the members show concrete behaviour since some scholars like Aries have tried to explain that the lack of abstract behaviour in primitive societies is compensated by the support of the maturity of the tribe. This author's analysis of cases of cultural disorders shows that the individual has no need of any abstract behaviour for the framing of such an elaborate code of conduct pre-supposes a superior mentality with abstract capabilities. Besides acting by concrete behaviour alone is not possible—however rich the background may be. It is then firmly established that both in civilized and primitive societies concrete and abstract behaviour are necessary components of human nature. But there is a difference. The abstract attitude finds its expression in primitive society in the formation of a permanent structure of society in civilized life in certain formations under special conditions.

The foregoing discussion shows that the notion of regarding the primitive people as intrinsically inferior to the civilized should be eradicated from the concept of primitivity. Inferiority is confined to one sphere alone i.e. technology. It is true that certain forms of social organization and mental states are associated with primi-

live technology but it has never been shown that these are un-normative. If however one has it been shown that any specific social organization or mental state has any intrinsic democratic nature it has clearly

been demonstrated that any type of social organization or technology is capable of producing values, codes of conduct and social ideals which stand against the flux of time.

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# Bejuni's; their initiation into Shamanhood.

PRABHANU SEKHAR DAS  
PATNAIK

## Introduction

The Western part of the district of Koraput of Orissa forms the present habitat of the bulk of the Dongria Kondhs tribe. An area of about 250 square miles covered by rugged and precipitous hills and mountains is known as Niyangiri Hills in the district of Koraput. The entire area is situated at an average elevation of about 1,000 feet above the sea level. Mountain ranges attaining 4,000 feet height are not uncommon in this locality. The whole area is diversified in appearance by exposures of naked rocks, ranges of ancient mangi-forest. The whole surface is thrown up into long undulations, the ridges of which have been cut into innumerable terraced Dengar plots for cultivation.

## Dongria Kondhs and their religion

The inhabitants of this area are known as Dongria Kondhs. Economically they are one of the most backward tribes of Orissa. The core of their religion consists of polytheistic beliefs in the cult of ancestors and a large, malevolent pantheon to be propitiated on innumerable occasions. Their magic is primarily concerned with my-

sterious impersonal forces and powers residing mostly in nature and artificial objects. The instruments employed in dealing with them are principally charms and spells, adjurational observances and above all magical rites are organically connected with their normal activities of hunting, fishing and agriculture.

## Religious functionaries and roles of Bejuni.

The religious functionaries who are entrusted with the propitiation of the village deities of the Dongria Kondhs are Jana Bejuni, Gurumati and Dighari. The Bejuni occupies a crucial place among them. There are a number of Bejuni under one Head Bejuni in a village, who perform various religious ceremonies on behalf of the public and participate in communal and individual functions. Besides their public role of the shamans', they also practise black-magic in their private capacity to destroy or damage the normalcy of the society and as such they may be termed as sorcerers. She performs her duties in a frenzied state and is believed by the people to be in direct

communication with the gods. By virtue of her position she commands high prestige from the people.

Basic composition of a Bejuni and respective powers.

The Bejunis are believed to acquire power through the special grace of their own ancestor-spirits or Penus. It generally comes to the persons who have a temperament towards it. With the increase of their earnestness or rather yearning and devotion, they begin to pass sleepless nights in contemplation of certain Penus. In the village Khamberi there are nine Bejunis who have got different penus. Arja wadaka's mother worships penus like 'Kalla Pala', Gundar Patu' Kashava Rani' 'Tumba-Rani' Nodi Mata and 'Tumba Mata'. Mata wadaka's wife worships 'Kumita Rani' and Baranakha Rani. Dalmiba Jeklaba's wife worships 'Hira Lal' and Danda Lal' Penus. Lohruka wadaka's wife worships 'Deute' and 'Ria-madr'. D. A. Arja wadaka's sister worships 'Leda-Penu' 'Suresh' and Rani Surendra. Dheda Shaka's wife worships Lepruti 'Thakuru' and Maradi-Devi.

#### Preliminary stage to become Bejuni

All these Penus are ranked in ancestor-spirits. It is evident from the above discussion that each one has her specific penu. Moreover the Bejunis worship female ancestor-spirits and the Bejus worship male ancestor-spirits. But there is no difference among them as far as their power over men and nature is concerned. For days together these different 'Penus' are contemplated deeply. Incantations are made in their

#### Qualifications to be Bejuni

When a female practices this art, is called 'Bejuni' and a male, is called 'Beju'. But in a village, the Bejunis always outnumber the Bejus. Generally the old women are eligible to become Bejunis though there is no formal age restriction. This is also not a hereditary profession. It is an acquired art and an personal accomplishment. Still, in dancing is essential for a Bejuni. It is a preliminary step to appease the Penu gods and in the course of frenzied dancing, she gets into a trance and in that state makes prophecies and offers solutions to the problems of the clients. Names of different penus are also to be learnt up before becoming a Bejuni. She should also know the art of divination with the movement of the winnowing-fan, waving of peacock feathers and suppuration through 'Arua-riki' in the winnowing fan. Similarly she must know the nature of sacrifice, to be made for different 'pujas' and for different diseases. To know all these techniques an apprentice undergoes training under a Bejuni, called pat-i.e., or or head Bejuni. Thus in a village there may be four to five pat-Bejunis who impart training to the interested candidates in the evening after the day's work.

honour. Dances are performed regularly. During these processes, the Bejuni in her dream or in frenzied state visualizes the respective Perus and solicits blessing from them. It is believed that the Peru is ordain different sacrifices to be offered to them on various occasions. Once the vision is realized, she is possessed by the spirits frequently and remains in trances. Then the public comes to know that the concerned woman is at the first stage of becoming a Bejuni. At the second stage the Bejuni contracts a spiritual marriage with the Gods. This is done even if the woman is married - her worldly capacity. Beju and Bejuni are considered probes and workmen until such marriage is performed. To gain supernatural power they must enter into coadjugal relationship with Perus and therefore they should be married for the second time.

#### Spirited marriage: The first-ceremony

To perform this type of marriage, a place is selected either near a stream or under a mango tree. On the Scheduled date, the concerned Bejuni and her husband go to the marriage altar, arranged beforehand after ceremonial bath in turmeric water. The concerned Bejuni becomes her own priest. She carries various articles like a smoking lac, eastern bami resin-powder, Sindhi-hed, arura rice, firewood, turmeric-powder, mango-powder and ragi-powder to perform the marriage ceremony. Another Bejuni (under training) also accompanies her. The bride Bejuni puts on a mask of Nagi

powder on her forehead and applies the same on the forehead of her husband. She also catches a handful of Arura-rice. The assistant Bejuni in the meanwhile brings a pitcherful of water from the stream, keeps it under the mango-tree and puts in a pinch of turmeric powder and leaves sal and mango leaves over it. The funnel of the pitcher is covered with garland of young mango leaves. The bride Bejuni throws handful of arura rice over it while uttering invocations to Dharam-penu. In the meantime the relatives and friends gather at the spot. The relatives and friends prepare garlands out of young mango leaves and fasten them to the pitcher. The bride Bejuni with the help of the assistant Bejuni invokes the specific Peru (with whom marriage is to take place) by muttering incantations. While doing that she shivers and develops hysterical fits with the beating of drums. Suddenly with a perceptible jerking she starts dancing and gets into a trance. This is an indication she is possessed by the specific Peru. Her husband then does a swar and joins his wife in dancing. Various questions are put to her by her friends and relatives which she answers in a state of trance. Immediately when the bride Bejuni starts dancing, the assistant Bejuni feeds arura-rice to a cock and a pigeon five times. Then she gives arura-rice to the bride Bejuni and her husband and keeps her right hand over their heads. She also starts uttering mantras and moves round the mango tree for 15 times. The process of giving Arura-rice to Bejuni and her husband is repeat-

ed during intervals of each round. The feeding of the cock and the pigeon is also repeated 15 times. It is the process of appealing the concerned Penu. After circumambulating the mango tree repeatedly a feather is taken out from the pigeons and cocks and the heads of both Bejuni her husband and the spectators are touched with it. Immediately after that the pigeons are killed by the assistant Bejuni and blood is sprinkled on the pitcher to smite the Penu. After this exorcism the bride Bejuni comes back to her senses and becomes free of the spirit.

#### The Second ceremony

After some days the second phase of marriage takes place on a reckoned auspicious for the occasion. It takes place at the altar of the first ceremony. In this phase the bride Bejuni stands facing East clutching the little finger of her husband. Another assistant Bejuni along with the married couple goes round the mango tree for seven times. This circumambulation is called Sarpanca. After that ceremony new clothes, dyed with turmeric are tied to the head of the bride Bejuni and her husband. The people then carry them on their shoulders to the place where the pitchers had been kept. The right foot of the bride Bejuni is placed on the left foot of her husband. The cock is fed Arun-rice for seven times and then the assistant Bejuni kills it by crushing its heart under her feet. The blood is sprinkled over the feet of the bride Bejuni. The head of the sacrificed bird is then placed over the pitcher.

#### Third ceremony of marriage

The third ceremony then takes place after an interval. During this ceremony the pitcher under the mango tree is taken out and its water is poured over the bride Bejuni and her husband. It is regarded as a holy bath during which the Penu gets into the body of both of them. Their feet are washed properly and the marriage rituals come to an end. A meal, feast is arranged after the ceremony. It is believed that the bride Bejuni hereafter attains the status of shaman equipped with spiritual power. She is highly honoured and respected afterwards.

#### The fourth or 'Tapa' ceremony

Tapa means sacrifice. This is celebrated only when adequate funds are arranged. It is a very expensive function as a lot of expenditure is incurred to purchase different animals and food articles to satisfy different ancestors, spirits and also to feed the entire village. The function continues for three days. It may be mentioned here that each Bejuni has got different penu and different animals are prescribed to be sacrificed for each. In this connection the case history of Maini, aged 46 the wife of Jagil Silken may be given.

#### MILK'S CASE HISTORY

Maini is the worshippers of four Penus such as Jai Guru, Budhi Guru, Sitala peju and Bengal peju. To observe this function she purchased four earthen pitchers six foals, three pigeons one goat, five

carries lambs forty kilogram of rice and other food materials. Before the day of ritual an altar (pat) with an enclosure and temporary leaky shed over it was prepared by the young men and girls (Dhangdas and Dhangdias) of the village.

#### USPRAVANAS ON THE 1ST DAY OF TAPI CEREMONY

On the 1st day about 10 Beijuni who were apprentices came to her house along with pat Beijuni (Head Beijuni after taking bath and put on clothes dyed with henna). The Pat Beijuni held a bundle of peacock's feather and a winnowing fan and the Beijuni held a winnowing fan each. The musical party also reached the spot. Mafo appeared before the public with dishevelled hair. She was wearing a new saree and had vermilion marks on her forehead. There were chains of tinkling bells on her ankles. She held a handful of peacock feathers. She also held in her hand an earthen pitcher with a narrow neck. This pitcher was full of water and mango leaves had been fastened to it. She handed over the pitcher to one of her apprentices and beatheared a portion of the altar with coothing. After this she drew up an inch square on the consecrated place. This was done with a mixture of araa rice powder, Ragi powder and vermillion. A lump of vermillion was placed at the middle of the square around which another square was drawn up. In

the small square about 10 kilogram of araa rice was strewn and the pitcher was placed upon it. When interrogated it was told that the pitcher represented Jali-Guru Purna a goddess. Jali Guru is considered to be very powerful. She protects the life and property of the people. She is therefore properly worshipped with the supplication of Araa rice after which adequate 'Tapu (Sacrifice)' is offered to appease her. The Beijuni (disciples) the pat Beijuni and Mafo sat before the pitcher in a row. Pat Beijuni first started uttering incantations and sprinkled water over the visitors to purify them. She offered araa rice to Mafo. On a winnowing fan Mafo also started uttering mantras. Supplication of araa rice and uttering of magical verses in a low voice started simultaneously. The disciples also joined them. Then the Pat Beijuni raised her voice. Mafo followed her and the disciples also started telling the same chanted mantras. This continued for half-an-hour after which a fowl, a pigeon and a lamb were placed one after the other over the head of Mafo and then tied to different poles posted besides the pitcher. After that the Pat Beijuni set fire to the resin powder and threw the same over Mafo and on the Pitam. Immediately after this Mafo started shivering and danced to the tune of the drum beating. It started with a slow rhythm but became rapid in due course with the quick beating of drums. It was the sign

of the Peru entering in to the body of Malo. The Pat-Bejuni and other Bejuni too started shivering and danced with Malo. The Pat-Bejuni dancing with Malo bent down placed left hand at her waist, waved two handfuls of peacock feathers and started dancing. The thinking of all the hosts of the Bejuni was very low. During the dance the pat Bejuni embraced Malo twice and thrice and fed her red powder. Malo gradually became possessed by the spirit of the Peru and nodded her head frantically. The spectators tried to control her but she went on dancing in a frenzied manner till she fell down unconscious. The pat Bejuni too fell down. Other dancers were restrained by the spectators. After a few minutes they all came to their senses and the last phase of the Puja was initiated by the pat Bejuni. Malo again supplicated with araucaria and muttered the Mantras. The sacrificed animals were again brought one after the other. They were bathed and vermilion was put on their heads like they were blessed by Malo. The fowl and pigeon were again broached to the hand of Malo and then strangled to death by the Pat-Bejuni. Their blood was sprinkled on the pitcher the soon square and also on the head of Malo. The lamb was not killed and led again at the pole. Puja for the first day was over. It was 3 O' clock in the afternoon when it was completed. A small feast followed. The Mandir (village leader)

Bhakti Nath and some relatives cooked rice separately. This was eaten exclusively by Malo, her husband and the Bejuni who participated in the dance.

#### 2ND DAY PERFORMANCE OF PUJA CEREMONY

On the 2nd day the same process was repeated with some deviations. On that day another pitcher representing Rudiguru. Peza was placed instead of the first one. The first one was placed at the back of the second one. This was believed to bring rain, protect animals and enhance animal wealth if properly appeased. Hence she must be given Tapa. The Bejuni attains greater identification with the Peru on the second day than on the first. As on the previous day, two fowls, one pigeon and one lamb were brought. Fowls and one pigeon were killed but the lamb supposed of being dead, was set free. The children of the village chased it and drove it out of the village so that I could not follow or even look back. It is believed that the lamb is the messenger who conveys the prayer of the concerned Bejuni to Rudiguru-Peru. Malo danced twice and became possessed by the spirit. She was applauded and gratified by the spectators. Pat-Bejuni taught Malo 'Pachna' i.e., the art of asking questions to the deity while supplicating with araucaria. While asking questions, the answers from the deity are believed

to be clearly audible to be Bejuni. The 2nd day ceremony continued from 6 A.M. morning to 5 O'clock in the evening.

#### 3RD DAY PERFORMANCE OF TAPU CEREMONY

On the 3rd day the ceremony started from 4 A.M. in the morning and continued for two hours and was completed before the break of dawn. After the drum-servers for the public were invited. Only the Pat-Bejuni and the apprentices were present. At 8 A.M. Mafo took bath with other Bejunis, put on a white turban and came out of the house with the third earthen pitcher. She placed the earthen pitcher in a square drawn with charcoal powder. A black cloth was wrapped over the pitcher. This pitcher represented the spirits, Saka-peju and Bengai-peju who are considered to be very powerful and bring immense harm to the people.

During this performance the same procedure was almost the same as other occasions. Supplication was made with araa rice by the pat-Bejuni in a whistling fan. This was accompanied with spells and incantations. Two black Johns were kept one after the other on the pitcher. Vermilion marks were painted on them. Araa-rice was also sprinkled over them. This process was repeated for 15 times. A pigeon was brought and the same

procedure was again repeated. Lastly a lamb was brought. The red pitcher was lifted and placed on the back of the lamb and the animal was forced to move round the black square. Then Mafo sat on the back of the lamb and rode thrice round the square. After all these rituals, Mafo again started supplicating with rice, and began to dance in a frenzied state. At the height of it she started rolling on the floor. The Pat-Bejuni immediately got up and threw a lump of earth-power at her and the apprentices caught hold of her and pressed her on the ground. This frenzied state symbolized her successful attainment of the status of Bejuni. When she came to her senses she again supplicated with rice. The Pat-Bejuni while doing this along with Mafo, whispered thrice in her ear. This is considered as the final lesson taught to the apprentice. The animals and birds for sacrifice killed one after the other. Their blood was sprinkled over the earthen pitchers. The carcasses were left at the altar.

#### Performances on the 3rd day

After completing the rituals on the 3rd day Mafo, accompanied with Pat-Bejuni and other disciples went to Dbara-Patu of their village and started dancing there. The Pat-Bejuni with other three Bejunis went round the village to ward off the evil-spirits. The evil spirits

are supposed to be invading the village and the Mutha during the three days of the performances. After warding off the evil spirits the party trashed to the altar where they were joined with others in a communal dance with the accompaniment of drum beating. This was done to give a public recognition to Mala as a full fledged Beyani. The villagers too gathered near the dances party and offered arat rice and pigeons to Mala to solicit blessing from her. Then Mala with her party moved round the nearby villages to the Mutha to acquire wider public recognition and collected arat rice and animals for sacrifice.

Persons in difficulties such as disease barrenness, etc promise to offer sacrifices to animals after getting proper remedy. They offer them sacrifices during the ceremony which is called Ghanta panch. Ghanta is a small earthen pot in which the offerings are made. When Mala remained busy in touring round the villages, the unmarried young men and women of the village made necessary arrangements for Ghanta Panch. The men piled up firewood on the altar and the women decorated the fourth pitcher with red ochre. The red is locally known as "Lings" representing Thakurji panch. Further Puja accessories like plain tawa, edible oils, fruits, vegetables and a buffalo were also kept near the altar. The jangled

was well decorated with flowers and mango leaves by the young girls. Each individual brought his or her own Ghanta, Purifier, pitcher and puja accessories. All these arrangements were completed by the evening so as to start the parish the next day.

On the 4th day the Ganga Jatra or otherwise known festival of the marathi pitchers took place. Kumbar kant and Hainmar kant are the two principal deities grouped together in Thakurji panch are worshipped during the occasion. It is believed Thakurji panch is very ferocious and inflict punishment on human beings and animals if she is not propitiated. Therefore the Jan gieg where Kumbhakant had suffered from arat rice, puja worship Beyani and dedicate their children at her feet and gather for her with offerings and sacrifice of "

On the 5th day Mala and Beyani and the apprentices reached the altar with the drum beaters and the bell workers. Each person carried a tray with arat rice and other puja accessories on the head, and either a fowl or pigeon with the right hand. The previous procedure continued. The sacrificial animals like a lamb, a goat, a fowl and a buffalo were brought to the altar one after the other in whom Mala sat for a few seconds, after which these animals were taken

back. The purpose was to make a quiet share of the offering and to make her up to the sacrifice by the time she got the sacrifice.

The Chamanas were seated on one after another like Mala and were equipped with wreathes and amulets. This process was repeated till five hours. During this time the supplication with wreaths and amulets to the gods also went on. When the process was over the amulets and wreaths were removed. Then she sharpened and took on jumping about. The deities and the focus of tributes. The amulets clapped. The crowning incense were laid and repeated a few more incense on the floor. Immediately the oil lamp caught fire and the young men around Mala, struck, and each for some time. She was also jumping over fire. It on the third night a piece of firewood when the she did not. After a few moments by squat she put her hands to the ground. Excepting the buffalo, were killed one after another by the Jau and the blood was sprinkled both over the pitcher and over Mala. At last the buffalo was flagged by the young men of the village and tied to a post at the outskirts of the village where a small platform had been prepared. Mala came to her senses after Nala's power had been thrown at her. She took her pitcher Ghanta on her head and others followed her. They walked

on to the towards the platform. Before reaching the platform the boys, girls men and women who had suffered from small pox came forward and prostrated on the road by which Mala was to pass. She walked on each adult and to a few she clasped with her

Mala reached the market and placed yet Ghanta first at the middle of the platform and others sent their respective offerings on both the sides of the main offering Mala again became possessed of spirit while supplicating with wreaths. Simultaneously the buffalo was cul by the young men and the road was placed over it and purified and then on the floor other animals were also sacrificed.

The individual worshippers also went to their own animals. The heads of the sacrificed animals were hung near the outlet's head. There was a pool of blood over the platform. The platform specially prepared for Thakurru Penu is considered to be purified by this pool of blood. One 'Ghanta' was first broken by Mala on the blood and others followed it to drive away Thakurru Penu from the village lest the villagers suffer again. They all come back with their respective animals excepting Mala Jau and Meenal brought her animals to the village as the rulers of the village. In the evening a feast was arranged by

Male in honour of the participants. Persons belonging to the 'Dumb' caste were also invited to share the feast. The ceremonies ended with fear. Vaiso thus became a Puj-

Bejuni. All Bejunis cannot afford the expenses of the ceremonies. They cannot therefore attain the status of Puri-Bejuni and have to remain an ordinary Bejunis.

# How and what the Kuvikondhs adorn.

BHARATI DEVI

## Introduction

In the year 2000 I had the opportunity to stay and work among the Kuri Khonds of Kuntangn a village in Koraput subdivision and district in Odisha India. In connection with the collection of data on the cultural life of their females I however could collect some additional information on the dress measurements. The data were collected partly by interviewing and partly by direct observation.

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## The dress

The dress of the Kondhs is simple and worn as simple as off. They do not of course practice monogamy so they themselves think their children. Since they are a weaver they depend upon their male people for their wealth & apparel.

The age of marriage varies. It is only at the age of 16 years when they start wearing a loh chha.

The general dress of an adolescent girl is like a loh chha or nothing on the upper portion of the body during the summer. But during winter in addition to the

loch chha or else she wraps round and stitching cloth. But a lot of ready-made skirt and pants are also seen in various stages of growth.

The dress is simple & consists of two pieces—an upper garment and a lower garment called respectively. Both are unstitched. The lower garment consists of two pieces—a thin cloth belt and then a piece of handwoven cloth with two borders which encircles the waist. This piece fails to encircle the waist but does not cover the entire thigh region though extended upto the knee. The upper garment another piece of handwoven cloth or a long newly woven cloth covering the breasts. Its ends are tied like a belt at the neck. The back side of the body has stitched garments like blouse have not yet found their way into their society. It is important to note that among the stage of dress amongst the girls are more number than the boys.

absence of any type of headgear and footwear among these people is notable.

Women especially young women, deck themselves with various kinds

All ornaments worn on different parts of their persons such as neck, ear nose hand finger wrist and waist.

Silver necklace or beads as shown in Fig. 16. Two types of silver necklaces are found. First is a single and round. The other type is of stringed coins (Fig. 111). Besides the necklace there is also of head ornaments known as Malis. It is also found in use. The beads are small in size and a bunch of stringed beads are worn at a time.

Piercing of earlobes is practised by both the sexes starting being done at an early age. In case of females the upper part of the pores is also pierced besides the earlobes. The ornaments for the ears are either of brass, silver or gold depending upon the economic condition of the person. The ornaments are very simple in design - plain simple ring, small in size is used for earlobe. It is known as *Malis*.  
The ornament of the pinna is not simple but slightly twisted and known as *Pattas*.

The ear piercing of nose is known by both the sexes. It is shown in Fig. 17. It is pierced in the nostril. The ornament of the nose is known as *Mura*.

of the nose are generally made of gold because brass contained some times causes ulcer. The ornaments of the nose is nothing but simple ring known as *Mura*. Fig. 18. The ornament of the septum is known as *Muli*. Fig. 19. It may be of the same nature or slightly decorated.

Women use ornaments on forearms only. The upper arm remains completely bare. Gold bangles of silver brass or even aluminum are used depending upon the economic condition of a person concerned. The brass bangles and aluminum bangles

and *Raga Paru* respectively. Fig. 14 shows one may be used in left hand or in one hand according to the nature of an object and the other varies from 1 to 10. Besides these I have seen with young them plastic bangles known as *Patti*. Women of younger age i.e. below thirty generally use the plastic bangles.

Male folk often use a single silver bangle on the right wrist. Some of them use two bangles on the right hand of female.

Silver rings are worn on the left hand by the females only. Insertion of a ring is operated in the middle finger of the right hand. Fig. 15 & 16.

Children of both the sexes with young children are seen to be wearing Children generally use head gear to guard the head. A specific of gear sometimes they ride on blackstring with a few hanging bells. The silver ornaments as Telliners is worn by female folk only.

The ornamental work at the ankle is known as *Adu*. It is made of brass. There are two varieties of *Adu*. One type resembles a bangle. Fig. 16 is the inner side of plain and rounded while the outer surface has a curved ridge. More than one *Adu* of this type may be worn at

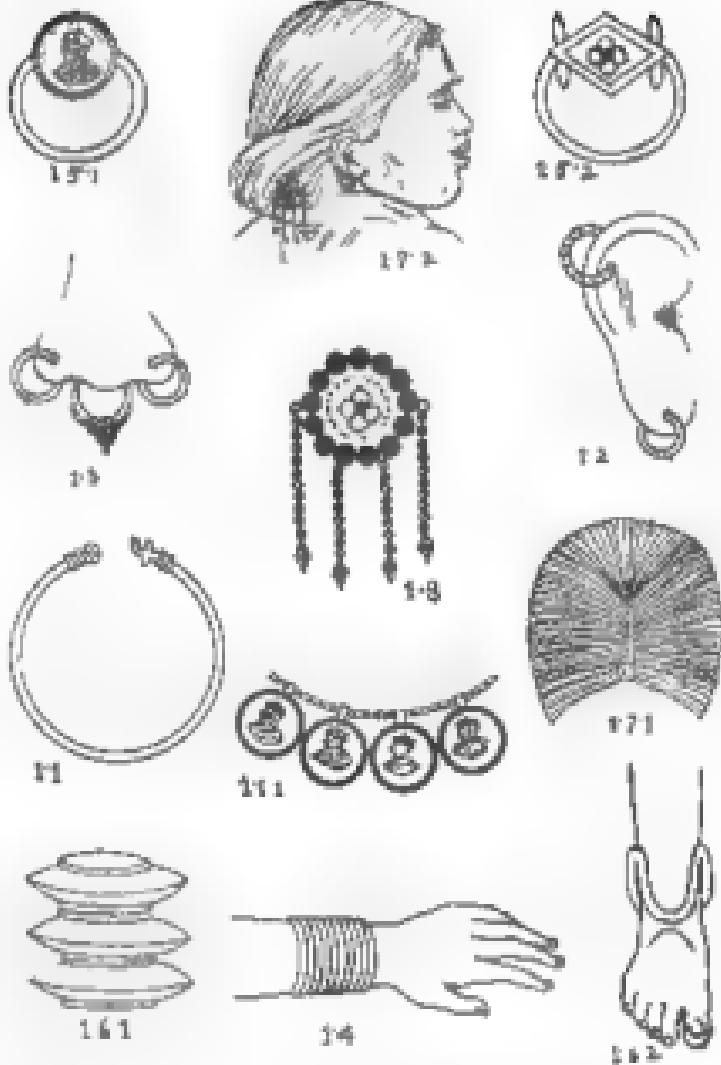


Figure 1. Hairdo and Ornaments of the Kuvikond Mesta

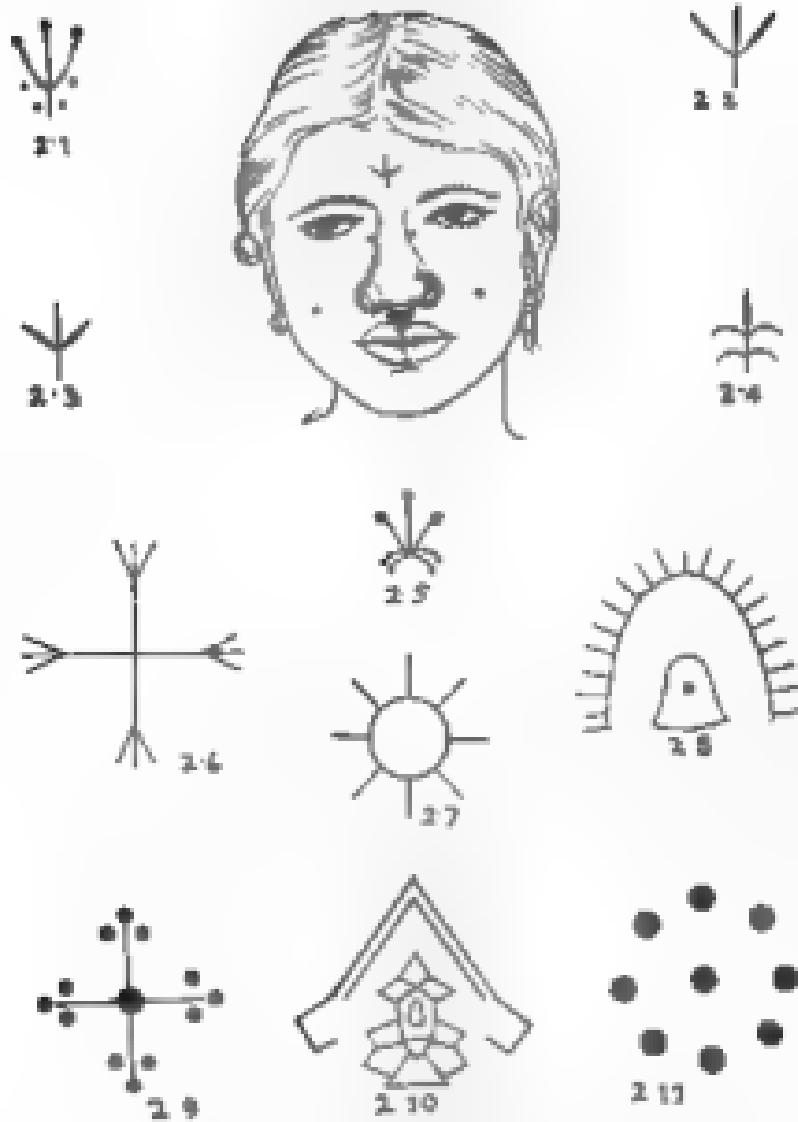


Figure 2. Tattoo designs of the  
Kuri-Ghond

a bone. The other type is worn singly (Fig 1.6.2). Two curves are present on this type Andha is worn only by adult females. Children wear small tinkling bells stringed on a thread known as Mala. The jhumki ornaments are sold at the bazaar of the people by the hawkers and they purchase it either by cash or by barter. But for the gold and silver ornaments it depends on the size of the adorned woman. Brass ornaments are purchased from weekly markets or fairs.

#### Personal Adornments

**1. Hair**—The people are in habit of shaving the heads of their young ones irrespective of sex during the first menstruation period of the mothers after the child birth. From this time onwards complete shaving is not done. Only the frontal part of the head is shaved while the hair at the neckside remains untouched. Shaving is done with a sheep crop instrument similar to razors. The mother herself or a woman of the neighbourhood shaves the head of a child. There is no prescribed age for keeping the hair after the fashion of the grandpa—advancing centuries until the child is quite grownup, i.e. the boy grows up with earlic or the girl as a widow. Kusum oil, a kind of locally made oil is used for brightening the hair. A kind of locally made oil is used as detergent in washing the hair.

In a traditional household the adult know male or not shaving but tying the bunch of the hair side & knot on the back. The young ones have changed their culture. They shave their hair like other caste people.

Khandavans comb their hair with wooden combs. They part their hair in the middle (Fig 1.7.1), comb it closely backwards and gather it into a graceful chignon (Fig. 1.7.2) with tufts of false hair on the left side. The tufts of false hair are prepared by themselves from their waste hair. Metal pin known as Threader is always in the chignon so that the two, they set come out. Threader is made of silver (Fig 1.8). A long pin is fitted at the centre of a decorative disc. Besides this a small tuft hangs long from the periphery of the disc.

The use of flowers on special occasions such as dancing or stitching ceremony is also noticed.

**2. Headgear**—They do not take care of their hair. The hair simply hangs down on the back or tied in a plain knot.

**3. Tatooing**—Tattooing is very popular among the tribe. It is especially popular among young women who consider it as a part of attractiveness.

Tattooing is done profusely on the face and hands. The use of fine straight and curved lines and abstract figures is prevalent. The most common design on the face head resembles a trident. The common designs at different parts of the body are shown in figure 2.

**4. Tatooing** is a painful operation about the body using written voluntary or submitted to the ordeal. A design is chosen by the woman who intends to get her body tattooed. The body is pricked with the help of needles on next designs. The soil for this purpose is collected from

the under surface of earthen wares which are used for cooking. The whole thing is then covered with a layer of saliva. The entire process is repeated twice or thrice to make the latter marks permanent.

There is no special class of tribemen in Kondh society. Women of the household or neighbourhood help each other.

Applicaton of cow colour on the body or chipping of teeth etc. is not in practice among the Kondh.

#### Dress and Coiffure

Systematic and intensive data on the dress and ornaments of the different tribes of India are yet to be compiled. However a comparison is made here with the help of existing literature. The Kavi Kondh, a Dravidian speaking tribe under investigation shares a few traits with the Munda speaking tribes also. For example the principal dress of an adult male is loin cloth among the Koya Kondh, the Andra Lengva (1963), the (Dutta 1872), Kharis (Roy and Roy 1927), Korwas (Dalton 1872), Mundas (Roy 1912) and the Orissa (Dalton 1872). Of course with the advancement of time and contact with outsiders there is a rapid change in traditional dress. For example stitched clothes have recently been introduced.

The Kharis (Roy and Roy 1927) females use two pieces of loin cloth for covering their body. A Kondh woman (present study) also uses

two pieces of clothes for covering her body. But they use a piece of lung cloth as undergarment for the lower part of the body. The Hua Majumdar (1950) has used a loin cloth under the Kuri.

In case of ornaments necklace of strung items is found to be used by both Dravidian and Munda speaking tribes such as the Asura Lengva (1963), Kondhs (present study) Orissa (Roy 1912) and Santals Mukherjee (1962). The distribution is also to be found even among the Gonds, Santhals (1962) of Nefia.

Agree, rings in which cultus are fitted are found to be used by both. In Kondhs prevent injury and scratch. Mukherjee (1962) of Santal Pargana and Maharashtra,

The ashibet is known by a country term Andu among the Hua Majumdar (1950), Kondhs (present study) and Mundas (Roy

The bangle of the females of different tribes presents an interesting feature. The comb-like gathered as a chignon on one side of the back of the head either right or left is found to occur among the Asura Lengva (1963), the (Dutta 1872), Kharis (Roy and Roy 1927), Khonds (present study) and the Santals (Dalton 1872). It also occurs among the tribes (Lata 1961) a far away Dravidian speaking tribe of Kerala. This style may be of Dravidian origin as the Tulus (Lata 1961) of Kerala are also found

to figure the same pattern. As J. Majumdar (1950) has the Muslim-speaking tribes are entirely absent in South India.

**Some Changes among the Hos**  
Majumdar (1950) or F. N. Ali Mulkerjee (1962) or the author, is not worn in a red skin chignon but at the centre of the back of the head.

The tinge is extensively practised by the Dr. B. N. Majumdar (1950) during his tour in 1872. According to him (1872) Major Ballal (1872) M. Idris Khan & 1st Lt. Chinni (1872) had 1916 turban. He thought it was of various forms but in the T. with pink or yellow turban. From his observations he found that the turban is the main cause of the difference between the two turbans. In the former the tinge is applied by

proper old borrowed the traditional Kondhi speaking people

In this, it may be added that from this little study it is not possible to say who the 'g' who are the original or the borrowers or the ones discarded except in the case of how do and whence.

#### ACKNOWLEDGMENT

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# Status of the Kuli Caste in the District of Bolangir and Sambalpur

Research Report of the Jagat Research Bureau, Orissa

This report was prepared by Dr. S. N. Mohapatra in the year 1942 on the basis of field investigation in the districts of Bolangir and Sambalpur. It is now being published in the name of Dr. S. N. Mohapatra and Jagat Research Bureau, P.O. Box No. 100, 12, Acharya Jagadish Chandra Bose Road, Bhubaneswar, Orissa.

The enquiry about the status of the 'Kuli' caste of Bolangir and Sambalpur was occasioned by a reference from the District Welfare Officer, Bolangir in his letter No. 14227 (Dw.) dt. 8-12-1941 on the subject. An idea about the anomalous character of the caste status of the Kulis pointed out in the said letter may be obtained from the following extracts from it:

"As per notification of the Ministry of Home Affairs, Government of India dated 29-10-1936, publishing the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes in Schedule order 1936, the Kulis are classified as Scheduled Tribes and only in respect of Sambalpur district are treated as Scheduled Castes. Some Kulis are found in Bolangir district in Raikela, Leasingha and Agalpur area and they present some interesting features. These Kulis are in a way differentiated from either the Kulis of Sambalpur or the Kulis which pass in as Scheduled Tribes. They are believed to be a subcaste of Meheras which are classified as Scheduled Caste but probably a little more advanced in Social hierarchy than them. They do not suffer from the stigma of untoucha-

bility and their social mobility is less than the meheras (Bhilas or Weavers) a class of O. B. C. people.

Certain old documents and judgments relating to the year 1931 of (a) the Maharaja of Sonapur formerly the head of all caste guilds and associations in this region, (b) The Muldar president of Barguda and (c) the Raghuram of Patna State are to be found here wherein it has been laid down that the Kulis are not untouchables and are to be served by Brahmins in all their social and religious ceremonies and occasions. This in itself is rather conspicuous and therefore raised question of the status of Kulis in Bolangir district. The question of denationalisation or otherwise also is linked up with it. Another peculiarity is that though the Kuli caste is not categorised as aborigine in section 186 of the Patna State Tenancy Act, 1914, in the settlement Khatian they are recorded as Adim Rayas and therefore practically treated as aborigines for purposes of the Tenancy Act. One consequence of this has been that a Scheduled Tribe can transfer immovable property to Kulis

without permission of the Subdivisional Officer without abroting the provision of section 105 and 106 of the Panchayati Raj Act read with article 74, (b) of the Orissa Merged states Lawm Act 1950. The position appears to be *answering* in due course.

Therefore it is greatly desirable that the status of Kols in Bolangir district has to be determined precisely in relation to Scheduled Tribes and Castes and I would therefore urge on you to please take necessary action at your end through your organization."

A field investigation on the caste status of the Kols was made during my tour of the Bolangir district from 12-2-1962 to 6-3-1962 in connection with the preparation of handbook on Caste. Data was collected from the Loisinga area of Bolangir district and Bargach area of Sambalpur district. The findings are presented as follows:

#### The Weaver Castes and the Kols

The Weaver castes of Sambalpur and Bolangir are divided into seven groups. These seven groups, in spite of their common caste occupation, function as seven distinct castes. These castes are—

1. Bhulia
2. Krushna
3. Dhera
4. Patta
5. Rangini
6. Koli
7. Gonda

The first four castes weave superior type of clothes. Koli and Gonda weave inferior and coarse

types of clothes. The Gonds are equivalent to the Pano Castes and are regarded as one of the lowest among the Scheduled Castes. They also have no lineage relationship with the Pano, Castle, Patra and Rangini specialists in the weaving of "Pata" or silk clothing. Krushna are specialised in the weaving of "Mothi" clothing which is a type of handspun & a different from that of "Pata". All the seven groups except the Gonda are exogamous. Only the Gonda, as has been observed earlier, have in-matriculate relationships with the Pano. The rules of endogamy are very strictly observed by all the other six groups. Other caste rules are also observed very strictly. This is characteristic of castes who have specialised caste occupations. The following is a list of the surnames of these castes.

Caste	Surname
Bhulia	Mehar
Krushna	Mehar
Dhera	Dhera
Rangini	Mehar
Koli	Mehar
Gonda	Numerous + others

The above list shows that four castes namely the Bhulia, Krushna, Rangini, and Koli have the same surnames. It is indicative of a past social bond which has been severed in course of time. Though all the castes have adopted weaving as their caste occupation, they specialise in different types of weaving. This specialisation might have been one of the reasons of caste differentiation among them.

It may therefore be maintained that the Kuli form a part and parcel of the weaver caste which has been divided into a number of sub-castes and each of these sub-castes have attained the status of full-fledged castes in course of time. Relationship of the Kulis with other Castes:

The relationship of a caste with other castes especially the Brahmins and other service castes like barber and washerman is a determinant of the status of that particular caste. The relationship of the Kulis with the Brahmins and other castes are given below:

Brahmins—Brahmins do not accept water from the Kulis. They also do not ordinarily touch the Kulis but untouchability is not strictly observed. The Brahmins enter their houses and take water from their merr, where it is brought by other people. Brahman priests also serve in the marriage, funerary rites and other functions of the Kulis.

Washermen—The washermen washes the clothes of the Kulis. They even wash the clothes of the women worn during menstruation which is regarded as polluted clothing.

Barber—The Barber cuts the hair of the Kulis and also shaves them.

Cow—The Gonds (cowherds) do not accept water from the Kulis but they mix freely with them and no untouchability is observed by them.

Kofota—The Kofotas are a cultivating caste whose status is equivalent to that of the Chasa of the coastal areas. They do not

accept water from the Kulis but freely mix with them and no untouchability is observed.

Ganda—The Gandas accept water from the Kulis but the Kulis do not accept water from them. The latter regard the Gandas as a very inferior caste and treat them as unjunctables.

Occupation—The sole occupation of the Kulis is weaving. They have absolutely no other economic pursuit. Agriculture is a subsidiary occupation for a very small fraction of people. Less than 1% of the Kulis own some land and in no case the holding is more than 2 acres.

Weaving constitutes a number of phases. Both the sexes participate in this. Some types of work are specially allotted to men while to women and some to both. A normal couple by working to their usual ability can weave twenty pieces of standard size cloth per month. (The standard size of clothes in the locality is very small. This may be valued between 50 and 60 rupees. A couple can weave twenty pieces of clothing only under ideal conditions but as they have to face a number of difficulties such as lack of capital and market, the limit does not exceed 12 pieces when there is heavy demand. The demand is ordinarily very low throughout the year. Therefore the output of the weavers is between 1 to 3 pieces of standard clothes per month. Thus the income of an average family may be considered as extremely low not exceeding thirty rupees per month. Apart from their poverty, the Kulis may be treated as economically

distressed. During the past fifteen years they have gradually lost their market. Handwoven cloth has gradually been replaced by machine-made cloth. Inspite of its superior artistic quality the hand woven cloth has not been able to stand the competition with the latter. The Kulis have been more hard but because they specialize in coarse and inferior type of clothing which is generally used by the poorer section of the people. These people now find the prices of the cloths produced by the Kulis rather prohibitive. The pursuit of weaving as an occupation has made the Kulis an easy going people. They are used to sitting under the shade and doing work leisurely. This has made them extremely immobile as far as occupation is concerned. Another fact cannot stand the hardships of other occupations like labour and cattle rearing.

**Education**—The percentage of literacy among the Kulis is not more than 20 per cent. Compared to their caste or economic status this may seem to be a very high proportion but actually it is not so because most of the people who declared themselves as literate knew nothing except signing their names. In the whole area there were only 5 persons who had read upto the Middle English standard and there were only two who had passed High School Certificate Examination. The highest educational achievement found among the Kulis

The Kuli As a Tribe. The Kulis are fully intergrated with the caste hierarchy of the Hindu society. They accept the superiority of the Brahmins, have functional relations share with other castes and have a rigidly fixed caste occupation. They worship the gods of the Hindus and have no separate gods or goddesses. They do not take such food and indulge in such practices which are prohibited for Hindus. Rather they observe like high castes in this respect.

Conclusion. On the basis of the above facts the following conclusions may be drawn—

- 1. There is no reason to justify the Kulis being treated as a tribe.
- 2. The Kulis have the status of a Scheduled Caste but in that capacity they occupy a position superior to other Scheduled Castes. A slight stigma of untrustworthiness is now attached to them but they are likely to be cleared up of this in near future.

**Recommendation**—It is therefore recommended that the Kulis should be treated as a Scheduled Caste in both Sambalpur and Bolangir districts. They may be descheduled after a period of five years by which time they would have achieved a status equivalent to other backward classes.

# Social Status of the Ujjas of Orissa

Research Report of the Tribes Research Bureau, Orissa

(This report was prepared in the year 1970 by Seiner, Kisan Das Deka, Research Officer, Tribes Research Bureau. The contents of this report reflect the socio-cultural status of the Ujja Community)

## 1 Introduction

The Ujjas have been an listed as a scheduled caste in Orissa. The basis of reference of this report is in respect of whether their socio-status entitles them to be enlisted as a scheduled tribe. This report is based on the few investigation conducted in the months of February and May 1970. The author was conductor mainly in four villages namely Puthibhurni and Rambudher in Ujjia Project Block of Nayabazar and Raodhar, and Barabali in Balasore police station of Balasore district. A few Ujjas of Chhota Jagai village in Ujjia sub-division of Nayabazar, Jagatsinghpur and Beria in Balasore police station of Balasore district were interviewed for cross-checking. Main interview method was adopted for

study in addition to observations and collection of Scheduled Information. In this report attempts have been made to show in brief their social status in the following areas mentioned below:

The first part of this report deals with the Ujjas of Balasore area showing their relationship with other caste people living there. In the second part a comparison has been made between the Ujjas of Ujjia group with their counterpart in Barabali.

## 2 Population of the Ujjas

The Ujjas are mainly concentrated in the districts of Balasore and Nayabazar. Their distribution according to 1961 census is as follows:

Name of the district (i)	Total population (ii)	Males (iii)	Females (iv)
Balasore	15	8	7
Rajdhani nadia (Phulbari)	1	1	—
Cuttack	20	12	8
Nayabazar	1,299	795	603
Balasore	5,031	2,546	2,485
<b>Total</b>	<b>6,424</b>	<b>3,263</b>	<b>3,161</b>

The above table shows that the main concentrations of the Ujias are in the districts of Balasore 79.2% per cent; and Mayurbhanj 20.7% per cent. Though found at Cuttack, Phulbani and Sambalpur their population in these districts is negligible.

In Balasore district their main occupation is fishing and they are chiefly found in coastal areas. In Mayurbhanj district they are concentrated in the areas adjoining the sea.

The Uja name might have taken its origin from the term Ujan - i.e. to go against the current. It was perhaps a war tradition to go against the current while catching a fish. This view is recorded in the Census of Mayurbhanj State, 1931 of over it was a tradition it is not in vogue now.

### **3. The Uja of Bellipal area**

Like many other Scheduled Castes the Ujas consider their caste name as degrading. They designate as Danda Chhetra Majhi which is a prefix of their caste, only according to the census of Mayurbhanj, page 1931.

As regards the origin of the name Danda Chhetra Majhi the Ujas have a legend that their ancestors held a Danda Chhetra royal umbrella during the coronation of lord Paraschandra. A different version of the story is that the umbrella was held to protect him from scorching heat of the sun while he was crossing a river in a boat during his exile.

The other sections are Amusta Baghi or Baghatai and probably Baik. But the Lujas could not tell anything about other sections. However these names have been enlisted separately in the Schedule Caste list. More informations could not be collected regarding these sections.

The Lujas of Balasore claim to be the original inhabitants of this locality. Their mother tongue is Oriya. There is no evidence that they ever spoke any other language. The Ujas live in numerous villages among such caste groups as Kudha Raju Jati, Kandara Hadi, Khawali yet etc. Their dwellings some times form a separate cluster in the village. In the social scale they occupy an intermediate status as untouchable. It was reported to me recently their touch was considered as polluting by the upper castes Hindus. Yet, they used to get the services of the washermen and unassisted Bol min. The washer used to pull their hairs out did not share them or cut their hair. Their new status has been mitigated to some extent. Their touch is no longer considered as polluting by the Brahmins and Khawaliya. Water and food day and pashas are not accepted from the Ujas by these other castes. The Ujas from their side consider some other scheduled castes like Poro, Kandara and Hadi as lower in status and do not accept water or food in any form from them.

The Uja community is divided into several sections called Gotsa. These include Basant a bird Nagawer (Cobra) Pingasa a bird Gundicha a bird etc. The

goats members abstain from killing or doing any harm to the birds or reptiles associated with the goats. The Brahman priest recites the gorts of the Uja chants, while conducting marriage and worship. It is curious that unlike other tribal and tribes they do not make into goya ceremony. They have a number of surnames such as Dala, Mangaraj, Rani, Behra, Palkar, Patta, Kanher, Banjara, etc.

A lineage in the Uja community is composed of a number of families whose members are descendants from a common ancestor. They recognise it till their ancestry is remembered. All members of the community living in one village or nearby villages are required to observe death and birth pollution in common.

A family in the tribal area in the case of a organization of the Ujas is a patriarchal patrilocal and patrilineal. Mostly families are nuclear in composition. Occasionally a family may include one of the parents or unmarried brothers and sisters. In the surveyed villages 67 out of 72 families were found to be nuclear. As regards the size of the family, it was observed that medium sized family (4 to 8 members) predominates in the Uja community. Their number is 36 out of 72 total families. The number of small sized families (1 to 3 members) is about 18 and that of large sized (7 to 9 members) families is 16. The number of very large sized family (10 and above members) is only 3.

The life cycle of an individual in the Uja community includes many

rites and rituals among which pregnancy child birth marriage and death rites are important. During pregnancy period a Uja woman like women of other neighbouring communities observes various taboos and restrictions in order to protect herself and the fetus from various assumed dangers. When a pregnant woman has labour pain a professional midwife is called for to help. After delivery she cuts the umbilical cord with the shell of a snail. The placenta of the first child is buried inside the labour room where as those of succeeding children are thrown away. After delivery both mother and child take bath in tepid water and a barber a man is asked to pare off nails of the mother to remove birth pollution partially. The period of pollution however continues for 31 days. During this period the mother observes certain taboos. A bath of birth purificatory ceremony is held on the 31st day after child birth. For this occasion 1 jati like other communities plaster walls with cowdung and throw ash by used earthen pots. The service of washerman is required to clean the clothings. The mother after 15 days is allowed to enter in kitchen where their ancestral spirits are believed to reside. In the evening the mother accompanies the in shrift to the bank of the river or pond to worship the goddess Ganga who is associated with child birth. The midwife offers cakes sweet puli rice to the deity saying a true life for the new born baby

The Ujas in Bargarh area invoke a Jewishian astrologer to calculate the position of the stars and

their influences on the child on the 3rd day of child birth. On the basis of the alphabets calculated by the Jyotish the parents or other relatives select a name for the child.

The Ujjas prefer child marriage and this is also practiced by other communities living in Bellapal. The rate of child marriage has decreased now due to the imposition of Hindu marriage act. Girls usually get married at the age of 13 to 16 and boys in between 18 to 20 years. It is highly objectionable to marry cross cousins as they are regarded as brothers and sisters. Junior levirate and junior surcease are allowed by which a woman can marry her husband's younger brother and a man his wife's younger sister.

The only recognized form of marriage prevalent among the Ujjas in Bellapal area is arranged marriage. Proposal for marriage usually comes from parents of the boy. Preliminary enquiries are made from both sides regarding the eligibility of the prospective mates and the economic condition of their parents. Proposals are finalized when the brideprice is agreed upon. Not only the Ujjas but some other Hindu communities also have tradition of paying bride price.

Wedding ceremony is finalized on an appointed day when the father of the boy alongwith some other relatives goes to the girl's place. There, the father or guardian of both of the boy and the girl take bath to set their son and daughter purified. After the bath-taking ceremony is over the boy's

father pays up the brideprice. Then both the parties in consultation with an astrologer fix up a auspicious day for the celebration of the marriage. The boy and the girl at their respective homes take ceremonial bath anointed with turmeric paste and oil. Next day the bridegroom with his friends and relatives proceeds to the village of the girl where the marriage ceremony takes place. Sometimes when he goes a day earlier the bridegroom takes the ceremonial bath at the girl's place. The latter type occurs less commonly and is usually preferred.

The rites or customs with the marriage ceremony among the Ujjas are almost similar to those of the clean caste Hindus like the Brahmins. The bride and the bridegroom are taken to the marriage booth Loweredde Mathraan anoints their hands reciting vedic mantras before sacred fire. The girl's parents enter in the groom's party with a feast. After this the bridegroom and his party return home with the bride.

The Chudai ceremony is held on the 10th day after marriage to restore a menstrual right to the bride to worship the ancestral spirits of her husband. The Jewish and the Brahmin officiate in this ceremony and perform it in accordance with the rules prescribed for clean caste Hindus. Here both the bride and the bridegroom offer rice rice to the ancestors of the groom. If a girl marries before attaining puberty the ceremony is held after her first menstruation.

In the practice of divorce the Ujjas differ from caste Hindus. Other Scheduled Castes living in the area also allow divorce. Widows and divorced women are permitted to remarry.

There is little difference in the observances of death ceremony between the clean castes and Ujjas though the latter group prefers burial rather than cremation to avoid the extra expenditure on purchase of timber wood and performance of other rites. Members of the community living in that village assemble in the house of the dead and make necessary arrangements to take the corpse to the burial ground. The dead-body is taken according to Hindu custom on a bier made of 6 bamboos. In the burial ground cooked food is offered to the dead and then kept in a pit. The eldest son lights a fire with wood saturated with ghee and puts it in the mouth of the dead. In case of cremation he sits the pyre with it. When cremation or burial is over all people who followed the procession return to the village after taking bath in a nearby river or tank. Next day the lineage members partake of a rice gruel mixed with neem leaves.

The Ujjas of Balipal observe death pollution 7 days for the unmarried and ten days for the married. The spirit of the dead is believed to haunt the house till their death ceremony is over. Rice and curry are offered on the 3rd, 5th and 7th day after the death to appease the spirit. At the conclusion of the ceremony houses are plastered with cowdung

and the earthen cooking pots in the house are discarded. Clothes are washed by washermen. The barber parts off, cuts hair of the mourners before they take the purificatory bath. Haircut is confined only to male members.

The death ceremony of a married person is observed elaborately. (In man print subsection) conducts a ritual on the 10th day for the final purificatory ceremony. A number of uncircumcised Brahmins are fed on the eleventh day.

The next annus Sradha is held after one year. It may take place on the 2nd day or after 8 months.

Ujjas' houses in Balipal area ordinarily consist of one room rectangular in shape with one door and it is divided into two apartments by a wall. The outer apart-

ment is used as a living room and the inner portion is used as kitchen. Persons living with parents or married brothers have two rooms. The well-to-do families usually construct a boundary wall to maintain privacy. There are separate cowsheds for the cattle.

The dress and ornament of the Ujjas are almost identical with those of their neighbours. Males wear a Ganchha or napkin reaching up to knees and old tame clothes while at work but put on better type of Dhoti, Ganji and Shiri when they visit their relatives. Women use small made or handloom sarees measuring 8 to 10 cubits in length. As a matter of daily habit

women wear only glass bangles while on festive occasions they adorn their body with silver anklets armlets waist chain and bangles. They also use golden nose rings. Their hairstyle is not different from their neighbours.

The household articles of the Ujjas of Bellapal are scanty. A few northern pots alarm alarm and eggs hawks and water pot a few iron implements and fishing appliances are all they have. Northern pots are used for cooking fetching water and preserving dry fish. Iron implements are used for miscellaneous cutting purposes. Fishing implements play a significant role in their livelihood. These include a bandha a wooden bar with a sharp end to dig earth for raising a ridge across the flowing water. Kada a wooden plate of a trepidum shape. Khanchi (unwoven baskettrap) and a variety of basket traps and small nets. Few can afford to purchase or prepare big nets for heavy fishing. Cultivators have a few agricultural implements like plough yoke etc. spade

Island fishing is the traditional occupation of the Ujjas. They depend on it for the large part of the year. The amount of earning from fish is varies from time to time depending on the quantity of catch per day. They usually catch small fish with the help of basket traps and small nets. The income from fishing is insufficient to meet the cost of living. As a result they also depend on wage earning. The kachis and the Jangs who are other men by profession are found in the same locality. They catch fish by

ways of nets and boats in the river Subarnarekha flowing through the heart of Bellapal and in the sea nearby while the Ujjas use only primitive type of implements and confine their endeavour to narrow areas around. They do not have the means to purchase nylon and stainless thread for making big nets. Recently a few of them are taken to sea fishing. These people are able to get employment for about 4 months from the month October to January which is the season for marine fishing. The number of Ujjas practising sea fish. ing is 6 in the Panchayat and about 30 in Nayabali village. Most of them have recently run into debt for purchasing marine fishing net and have outstanding debts varying from Rs. 200 to Rs. 400.

The Ujjas of Bellapal mostly work as agricultural labourers. Daily wages vary from Rs. 2 to twice agricultural rates to about Rs. 1.50 on ordinary days. A few work on an annual contract. In this case they get remuneration amounting to Rs. 30 to Rs. 40 per month in addition to food and clothing.

The Ujjas have almost subsistence economy. Most of them do not possess any landed property. In the survey in two villages of Bellapal, about 42 households out of a total 72 were landless. 29 households have less than 1 acre of land and only one had a holding above 1 acre but below 2 acres. A very few families also work as share croppers.

Animal rearing among the Ujas also indicates their poverty. As per the survey in Balipal about 28 households out of 72 possess about 12 buffaloes, 11 cows and 13 goats or less. Rice is the staple food of the Uja like other communities in their region. They take it 2 to 3 times a day. Dry fish, hampered and corn starched dal or curdy provide side dishes. Their diet rarely contains any milk, milk products or meat. Both males and females chew tobacco dust. Males also smoke hand and pipe country made cigar.

Division of labour is primarily based on sex. Women do all household work like cooking sweeping the floor, plastering walls, drying cow dung, clearing utensils. Infusing water, breaking paddy etc. of course fishing, wage earning as day labourer come within the male sphere. It is interesting to note that old and elderly women construct fishing with baited traps or small round nets and sell the catch in the market though they consider it degrading to work as wage labourers. Prestige value is attached to fishing. Legendary evidence of Parbati, the consort of Siva once doing fishing, is cited to prove the popularity of the trade.

Literacy is very low among the people. Only 22 males out of 145 male population and 4 females out of 133 are literate. Among the literates 11 males are of the L.T. standard and 2 of the M.E. standard. The percentage of literacy is 9.3% which is below the percentage of State average literacy among the Scheduled Castes.

The Ujas have strong faith in Hindu Gods and Goddesses. To ward off any danger or to gain a material prosperity they worship deities called Barha, Jora, Lakshmi, and village tutelaries such as Mangala Devi, Sitala etc. Offerings of fruits are made to the higher deities in the shrines through Brahmin priests.

The village deities are worshipped communally by the villagers belonging to different communities. The priest who conducts them is known as Debari. He usually comes from the caste Hindus. In the village Pancharakhi the tutelary deities known as Vima Simha Nimesha and Mengala are worshipped by a Debari belonging to Jati caste. In Nayabath the priest comes from the Uja caste. Prescribed rituals are performed in the shrine in the Uja's rural village. Performance of rituals in the first day of Orissa month is however the common pattern of worship. Special rituals are performed when there is an out break of epidemics like cholera, small-pox etc.

In order to appease the ancestors deity the Ujas observe Graha ceremony twice a year. Graha Graha is held in the month of Kartika (October November) on the day of Kaliyatra when other Hindu communities propitiate their ancestors. Paha (dark red cotton plant) are lighted to receive the ancestors in invitation of other communities. Bellinda is offered through the Brahmin on behalf of the Uja for the same purpose on the first day of the Orissa month of Baisakh (April May) on the bank of a river. This is however not

observed by other clean castes. Fried rice flour are offered on this occasion. Besides these rituals which are held at the lineage level the Ujjas also observe Sradha ceremony at the family level and offer animal sacrifice to their ancestral spirits.

The deity Mahadeva is associated with fishing and hence is worshipped by the Ujja, Keuta and Ishi. Whenever they catch fish in the sea or in a dangerous water tank they offer the biggest fish of the first catch to Mahadeva with a view to overcome any apprehensive danger.

Ganga Dass is considered as the deity of the sea and only those Ujja who have adopted marine fishing participate with other fishermen to worship this goddess. The festival is held in the month of January—February just after the sea fishing for the year is over. All the seafishermen worship her in groups.

Rituals for sowing, harvesting of paddy etc are observed by the Ujja who practise cultivation.

Besides these festivals the Ujja of Bellapal also observe other Hindu festivals like Holi, Ganesh, Navar etc.

It was reported that previously the Ujja had a caste organization to decide the disputes relating to their social life. It does not exist now-a-days. The village council composed of all important elderly members of the village including Ujja and other castes,

deals with all socio-economic and religious affairs.

#### 4. The Ujja of Udia area:

Due to the stigma attached to the name of Ujja in Balapal, area members of the community designate themselves as Dandia Chhatra Majhi which is either a section of or synonym for their caste. In spite of this they have not discarded their traditional occupation. In Udia area the Ujja has assumed the tribal status of the Savar. They are easily distinguishable from the Ujja of Bellapal by their occupations and various customs and practices. Origin is traced from Bhawana, the great Savara King who is believed to be the first devotee of Lord Jagannath of Puri. It is not known as to why they have not identified themselves with any upper caste caste to elevate their status. Other communities recognise them as Ujja and they themselves also confess this when taken into confidence.

The physical and social surrounding in Udia area is quite different from Bellapal. The villages where intensive study was conducted are situated close to the forest and Simlipal. Non-Hindu tribal groups like Gondwana, Bhuiyan and non-Hinduised groups like Soschi, Ho, Kolha etc constitute the majority in the area.

The Ujja who were interviewed during field investigations could not tell anything regarding their migration from any other place. It may be presumed that they have

migrated from Balasore where they are heavily concentrated.

Like their counterparts in Balasore the Ujias of Jajpur also enjoy the de facto status of a caste caste. The barber and washerman have been serving the community since long Brahmins who serve them are not interested. They have replaced the Jyotish who formerly served as the priest. In spite of all these factors the upper caste Hindus and Mind and tribes do not accept cooked food or water from them. On the other hand the Ujias consider the Scheduled castes like Pucca Hadda, Dom and Scheduled Tribes such as Ho Kuchia, Karabia, Mankodia etc. as lower to them and do not intermix with them.

The social structure of the Uja here is based on Gatra at the next and family at the base. Except Nagawar and Rassipal other type of Gatra as are found in Balasore are absent here. They have some other Gatra such as Padhala, a wild animal and Saraswati a bird etc.

Marriage is strictly prohibited among the lineage members. Here the Ujias recognise kin relationship up to three generations instead of more probably to offer a wider scope for marriage in the community whose population is small. Nuclear form of family is more in abundance. Out of 45 surveyed families about 39 belong to this group. The joint extended and other type of families are quite negligible numbering about 1, 4 and 1 respectively. As regards size of the family it is noted that medium sized family is more common. West is important of the small size

family. Their number is 24 and 14 respectively. West comes large-sized family whose number is about 7. The very large sized family numbers only one. This is also the common pattern in Balasore area.

The difference in surnames has been recorded in two areas. Except Dihari which is found common others are Tageta, Palai, Paniputra, Satyanayak, Katsala, Nayak, Boudhikar, Pradhan, Dugarbar. Most of these imply the title of the service holder under a feudatory king.

The life & customs in connection with the socio-economic life of the Ujas have been little affected by tribal influence. They follow their traditional customs in death, marriage and birth, especially. Rather they have gone a step forward than the Jatis of Balasore in this regard mainly by getting the service of a high class Brahmin. Along with the traditional customs they have also absorbed a few tribal traits. Different sacrifices in the ancestors on the occasion of marriage are money offering of an egg to the Nagayet, Nachi expect and a song like for new born baby etc are a few such instances. Another striking feature is the prevalent of love or courtship which is their traditional form of negotiation marriage. Boys up girls track each other and take love songs to write love poem in forests in search of fruits, roots and tubers.

The economic life of the Ujas has been greatly affected due to change in physical surroundings. It is noteworthy to mention the occupational mobility. Even in the same area variations in main occupations are observed. The Ujas

who inhabit Poddadhi area close to the Samigdi live on forest collection where as those who have settled down, further away from this area depend on wage earning for their livelihood.

The forest clad Bandalpur Hill is of immense help to the Ujjas of Poddadhi area providing ample opportunity to procure forest products. Except for transplanting and harvesting time when they get work in the village or as day labourer, the Ujjas spend most of their time in collecting forest produce. Their collections include honey, turmeric root, tamarind, Mahua, Palus, Jackfruit, Sunari, Bark, Kerosene seeds, Mahua seeds etc. These articles are sold to the Government contractors and in the weekly markets. Usually they go down from the hills on each weekly market day to sell their forest procurements and purchase daily necessities. Next day they again proceed to the forest. The local tribals like Rathads, Santals, Kolhas etc. do not depend so much on forests as the Ujjas.

The Ujjas are found engaged in both agriculture and wage earning and agricultural operations are in three possess landed property. Out of 46 surveyed households about 28 belong to landless group while 11 households have land up to one acre, 4 have in between 1.1 to 3.0 acres and 2 have within 3.1 to 6.0 acres. A few families also cultivate land on share cropping basis. As regards cattle wealth the position of the Ujjas here is worse than that

of Bandalpur area. Out of 46 house holds only 3 households have 7 cows, 2 bullocks and 7 goats in total. In addition to these they keep fowls to meet the demand of their religious practices.

The Ujjas of Poddadhi area get opportunity for hunting and catching birds while they stay in the forest. Usually they hunt by help of bow and arrow. Birds not only provide meat but also bring them cash money. They are attracted by bamboo splits impregnated with man which are put on the boughs of the trees. Those birds which can be domesticated are sold in the market.

The Ujjas have almost dropped out their traditional occupation i.e. fishing. Only occasionally they catch fish in tanks, agricultural fields and rivers like other non tribemen communities.

The remaining in the proper area are found to be more active for collection of forest products as the above tribes except the Kolaray. Hence their main wages as day labourer working in agricultural field, in construction of roads and buildings and also engage them selves in domestic work. Collection of forest produce, hunting and fishing are occasional additonal to their earnings.

Thus the occupational pattern is different areas is not the same. The major sources of income in order of importance in different areas are as follows:

Bandalpur area	Poddadhi	Uda's Area	Uda's Proper
1. Wage earning	Forest collection		Wage earning
2. Fishing	Wage earning	--	Cultivation
3. Cultivation	Cultivation	--	Forest collection

It is found that the fishing, the traditional occupation of the Ujas occupies the second place in Balipal area whereas in other areas it is not at all a major source of earning.

In Pudhitha, Ujas women are a great help to their husbands. They participate in economic pursuits. Collection of turmeric, pulses, green beans, etc., and preparation of jhutu flour from the tuber are done by females. They also earn wages as day labourers and help their husbands in agricultural operations. The males do all their work alongwith hunting, collection of honey, fishing and catching birds etc.

Most of the Ujas have one roomed dwellings. It is partitioned in the middle to make two apartments. All the houses are thatched and built of mud. The household equipments consist of hunting and food gathering materials in addition to a few brass and aluminium utensils, palm leaf mats, string bed, cutting and ploughing implements, etc. They do not possess a variety of fishing implements.

The dress and ornaments of the Ujas are the same as the local non tribals. They speak Oriya as their mother tongue. Their physical appearance is quite unlike the local tribal people.

The field investigations evidently show that Ujas do not evince much interest in education. Out of 99 males only 16 literate without educational standard and 3 have come up to L.P. standard. Among 109 females only one has passed L.P. examination. The percentage of literacy is 9.1 which is even

below the standard of literacy than the Ujias of Balipal.

Due to the impact of tribal religion the religious beliefs and practices of Ujas have undergone a considerable change. They have strong faith in both tribal and non-tribal deities. Hindu higher gods and goddesses are worshipped if somebody makes a vow. Bagam, a tribal deity, is regarded as very powerful. He is to be propitiated each year for their wellbeing. Shrines for the deity are to be found in some villages in Uja deeper. In Pudhitha area they approach him by sacrificing goats, hens, etc. in the forest in the month of Chaitra (March-April) before they start collecting honey. The Ujas pantheist includes a number of deities, which are worshipped by the Dehuri tribe. The Dehuri who worships deities called Akhara Deute installed on the foot of the Khandipat on behalf of the inhabitants of this area at an interval of a few years, belongs to Uja caste. The inhabitants of the villages situated nearby contribute for the festival. The Akhara Deute deities here taken their names after Rajput deities installed on the top of Khandipat.

The village tutelary deities are considered as the common deity for all castes and tribes living in the village. Hence co-operation of all communities is prime necessity for their worship. The village priest called Dehuri usually belongs to a caste or tribe, considered as lower in status than the clean caste. The Dehuri of Badajhanpal is a Khandula Gouda whereas in Gandler he is a Kolha. The Ujas co-operate and contribute

with others when any ritual is observed.

The most important village festival, Arba Naukhia (New mango partaking ceremony) otherwise known as Dallipura is held in the month of Chaitra (March-April). The villagers bring Sal (tough cereals) from the forest and plant it before the tutelary deity. On that day goats and fowls are sacrificed to appease these deities. They also offer some green mangoes which are distributed among the villagers after the festival is over. On that day the villagers offer green mango to their ancestors after which they are allowed to take it. Besides this, Danting is observed at the village level in the month of Avisha (September-October). A basketful of seed is ceremonially brought from the river bank and kept before the village deity for 7 to 8 days. Paddy plants and young and old seeds are sown on it. These are ceremonially thrown away after germination. About 7 fowls are sacrificed to propitiate the village deity for this occasion.

The Ujjas follow the tribal procedure of sacrificing animals. The ritual spot is plastered with cowdung and then the priest or head of the family, as the case may be, applies vermilion in the name of several deities including Bhumi-mata (mother-earth), Dharm Deeda (Sun god), Baran, etc., and keeps ghee, ghee or clarified butter

paddy) in heaps. The goats or fowls are then allowed to partake these rice grains after which they are sacrificed in the name of the concerned deities.

In addition to these festivals mentioned above the Ujjas also observe some Hindu festivities like Raja, Ganesh, Makar, etc.

As regards ancestor worship it was noted that they observe the traditional Sradha ceremony to appease the ancestral spirits each year on the day of their death. Poins Andha and Dallipura are however not observed in this area. But when the new mango and new rice partaking ceremonies are observed they offer these first to their ancestors.

The Ujjas here do not have any organised caste assembly like those at Ballapal. The Village Pandayat including elderly members from Ujja and non-Ujja groups decide the cases relating to socio-economic affairs.

Thus it is found from the foregoing pages that a great deal of tribal traits have made their way in to Ujja community in Ulla area.

### 3. Conclusion:

In the light of the above findings it may be concluded that the Ujjas may continue in the list of Scheduled Castes until they are sufficiently advanced both socially and economically.

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